

Types of Pronouns 1

Pronouns do a great job of standing in for nouns. But some pronouns do more: *Reflexive* and *intensive* pronouns, for example, give their antecedents extra emphasis.

Another group of pronouns—*indefinite pronouns*—also stand in for nouns, but they don't refer to a definite person or thing. Indefinite pronouns are often used without antecedents. Indefinite pronouns keep the subject vague—which might be a relief to the person who is the subject: *Somebody* spilled the cereal. *Nobody* cleaned it up. *Somebody* left the bike in the driveway. (See 760.2, 760.3, and 762.1 in *Texas Write Source* for more information.)



Examples

Reflexive Pronoun:

Little Jeff has finally learned how to dress **himself.**

(The reflexive pronoun “himself” throws the action back on the subject of the sentence. The sentence would not be complete without it.)

Intensive Pronoun:

Little Jeff **himself put on his pants.**

(The intensive pronoun “himself” intensifies or emphasizes its antecedent. However, it's not necessary; the sentence is complete without it.)

Indefinite Pronoun:

****Somebody** left these pants on the floor.**

(The indefinite pronoun “somebody” doesn't stand in for a particular person. The person is indefinite or unknown.)

Directions

Write a reflexive, intensive, or indefinite pronoun in the blanks in the sentences below. Write “Ref” above each reflexive pronoun, “Int” above each intensive pronoun, and “Ind” above each indefinite pronoun. The first sentence has been done for you.

1. ^{Ind} Something warned me not to make a sound as I tiptoed up the dark staircase.
2. Instead, I ended up making loud creaking sounds as if King Kong _____ were stomping up to the second story.

3. I could not stop _____ from trembling like a leaf.
4. As I reached the top of the stairs, I felt _____ brush my leg, and then I heard it throw _____ down the stairs.
5. I stood as if frozen to the landing, desperately telling _____ to calm down.
6. As my eyes adjusted to the darkness, I looked around for _____ to hide behind.
7. Just then, I saw _____ with many shining eyes watching me from under the bed.
8. I threw _____ in the direction of the light switch.
9. I flipped the switch and found _____ face-to-face with a possum and her brood.
10. _____ could have prepared me for what I saw next: the possum family suddenly appeared to be dead.
11. Thinking of _____ as a murderer, I carried the throw rug full of “dead” possums out to the garden.
12. Later, when I took Mom out to the garden, _____—not one possum—was there.
13. Much later I realized that _____ had ever told me what “playing possum” really meant.

Next Step Write a short story about a scary experience you actually had or about a scary experience someone told you about. Try to use at least one reflexive pronoun, one intensive pronoun, and one indefinite pronoun in your story. Exchange papers with a friend. Enjoy the story and then check to see if the pronouns have been used correctly.